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CONT'L

THE NAPOLEON MYTH

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NAPOLEON BEFORE THE SPHINX. (By J. L. Gérôme.)

THE NAPOLEON MYTH

BY

HENRY RIDGELY EVANS

CONTAINING A REPRINT OF "THE GRAND ERRATUM," BY JEAN-BAPTISTE PÉRÈS, AND AN INTRODUCTION BY DR. PAUL CARUS

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INTRODUCTION.

It is remarkable how much more our historical traditions are saturated with mythology than we are commonly aware of, while at the same time legends, in spite of their fanciful dress, contain more of actual fact than, on a superficial inspection, historical criticism seems to warrant.

Traditions, be they ever so mythological, if they are genuine, are much more conservative than they may appear at first sight. Though the Trojan war may be a tangle of legends reflecting primitive myths, the Homeric narrative is after all based on actual occurrences. Though William Tell never existed in Switzerland, there must have existed many William Tells, not only in Switzerland but all over the world. Though the Biblical account of Samson's deeds, like the twelve labors of Hercules, is the echo of a Babylonian solar epic which glorifies the deeds of Shamash in his migrations through the twelve signs of the zodiac, there may have been a Hebrew hero whose deeds reminded the Israelites of Shamash, and so his adventures were told with such modifications as would naturally let the solar legends cluster about his personality.

Biblical traditions have in one sense been fully verified by the Babylonian excavations. They show that occurrences such as are recorded in them actually took place, but the statements in the several books of the Old Testament are not simply narratives of the facts but stories of events as they appeared to the children of Israel at the time when they were written. They are onesided

and are not historical in the strictest sense of the word; they are historical only in so far as they are echoes of actual events, the narrative being modified by the beliefs of their authors.

The word Homer means "arranger" or "compiler" and it is obvious that the several songs of the Homeric epics are not written by the same hand. They are two great compilations and we must assume that the ancient rhapsodists selected with preference themes more or less closely related to the Siege of Troy and the adventures of Odysseus. They may have composed other songs which are now lost, but when in the sixth century they were redacted into two great epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey,* the most obvious discrepancies were removed, while all those materials that did not fall in with the general plan were doomed to oblivion.

Troy was situated in the northwestern corner of Asia Minor in a place favorable in the old times for the development of a large commercial city. It offered excellent opportunities for the exchange of goods that came from both the East and the West,— from the interior of Asia and from Europe. The coast was hospitable for such ships as were built in those days, but the advantages were counterbalanced by the disadvantages which exposed the city to hostile attacks and so the place became unsafe on account of its wealth, proving an attraction to pirates. Homer tells us the history of the capture of Troy not as it really happened, but as it lived in the memory of the Greek nation between the ninth and fifth centuries B. C. It seems a hopeless task to extract from the *Iliad* the historical facts that underlie the story which, in spite of its historical background, is a tangle of myth and legend. There can be no doubt about it that Helen is a humanised form of *Selene,* the moon; but for all that, some mortal woman named Helen may have been the cause of a war between Greece and Troy! Odysseus is the sun in his migrations, who encounters innumerable adventures and descends into the underworld, whence he returns unscathed to the domain of the living; yet there may have lived an adventurous chief of Ithaca, named Odysseus, who roamed all over the world and came home after an absence of twenty years, an unknown beggar.

Now it is strange that the excavations of Schliemann seem

to verify the Homeric stories, for Schliemann discovered ancient ornaments and weapons such as are described in Homer, and believers in the letter of Homer rejoiced at the fact and declared triumphantly that, after all, Homer must be believed in; but, unfortunately for these enthusiasts, Schliemann's excavations prove too much, for he excavated not only one city of Troy, but several cities which are built one upon the top of the other, proving that the siege of Troy and the conquest and burning of the city, had not taken place once but several times; and so we see that history must have repeated itself, and the mythology that overlays the tradition of one tale may have suited all others of the same kind. If a myth embodies a general truth, the myth will find verification in history whenever events of the same kind happen, not once but repeatedly, for the myth stands for the type and the type is realised in every concrete instance.

As to Tell, we have to state that no family of that name can be traced in Switzerland at or before the time of the Swiss struggle for independence, and the story of Tell's famous shot at the apple on the head of his child is mentioned for the first time in a chronicle written in 1470, *i. e.*, about two centuries after the alleged occurrence.* But while there is no foundation in Swiss history for the tale of Tell, we are familiar with similar stories among the Norse, the Danes, and the Saxons.† We can scarcely doubt that the legend is a last reminiscence of human sacrifices which, with the progress of civilisation, were gradually abolished, and one form in which the abolition of human sacrifices was effected consisted in a ritual according to which the victim was consecrated to death but was given a chance of escape.

* The Tell legend appears first in the so-called *Weisse Buch* of the Archives of Obwalden, 1470; and again in the *Chronik* of Melchior Russ, 1482. There is further a Tell ballad of unknown date, and Tschudi, who wrote in the sixteenth century, incorporated it in his *Chronicon Helveticum*. Tschudi's account was utilized by Schiller, who, in his famous drama, gave the story its final and classical form.

† Saxo Grammaticus tells the Tell story of "Toko," the Edda of "Egil" and an old English ballad of "William of Cloudeslay." It would lead me too far to exhaust the subject, but a traveller's report even of distant Arabia gives us information of a custom in which a person is offered as a sacrifice, until a skilled marksman liberates the victim after the fashion of Tell's shot.

While we positively know that Tell is not an ancient Swiss name we may boldly say that the stories of Tell did not, but *might* as well have happened as not, for wherever there is oppression there we meet with characters such as Tell, who oppose a tyrant's violence.

Mankind will always interpret the facts of life in the light of their convictions and beliefs. Wherever a great personality rises into prominence stories will be told of him which may have happened to characters of the same type of bygone ages. This is the reason why the same anecdotes are told of Cæsar, of Charlemagne, of Frederick the Great, and of Grant, and they will be told of great generals of the ages to come.

When Napoleon rose into power his heroic dash and his quick success dazzled the minds of his countrymen and he was naturally compared now to Alexander the Great, now to Cæsar, or even to the Gods. The fate of former conquerors became, as it were, a prophecy for his career. He himself was induced to imitate his predecessors, and his admirers did not hesitate to see him in the light of mythical heroes. Thus it was but an inevitable result that many incidents were attributed to him simply because they belong to the same type of heroes, mythical as well as historical, with whom he had been classified.

A little psychological insight into the constitution of the human mind will best explain the situation.

Every occurrence which we experience is at once co-related to and associated with former experiences and both are so fused that an unsophisticated person can not easily separate the facts from the opinions which we hold as to their nature. Thus myth creeps into history and miracles are common events to those who believe in the miraculous.

In our religious literature we find the same mixture of fact and fancy. There is more historical truth in the history of Buddha, and of Jesus, and of Mohammed than may appear at first sight, judging from the miraculous adornments of all religious tradition. As ivy quickly covers an old tree, the mythological accretions almost conceal the real facts of the lives of religious leaders. We can be sure that Jesus, Gotamo Siddhartha, and Mohammed were real persons, but the people

who look upon them in faith co-relate the acts related of them with their highest religious ideals of the Buddha, the Christ and of the Prophet. The Christian Gospels are not simply narratives of the life of Jesus but they are the story of Jesus as the Christ, embodying ancient traditions not only of the Jewish notion of a Messiah but many other kindred hopes. They echo the expectations of the people who were prepared for the coming of a Saviour. The Christ ideal existed before Jesus. The Jewish Messiah conception had been modified and deepened by the Persian doctrine of Mithra, the virgin-born viceroy of God's kingdom on earth, the Babylonian Marduk, the Conqueror of Death and mediator between God the Father and men, and also the world-resigning Buddha of India. When Jesus was accepted by His disciples as the Messiah, the Christ, all the notions and honors of previous kindred figures in the domain of both history and mythology were transferred and attributed to Him.

The picture of Jesus in the New Testament is not strictly historical, but it contains historical facts. It is the story of Jesus, the Nazarene, as interpreted by those who believed that he was the Christ.

* * *

One of the best satires ever written in the literature of the world is Jean Baptiste Pérès's "Grand Erratum," which appeared in 1827. Its shafts are aimed at a book of M. Dupuis, a scholar of great erudition, who believed that all religions, and the story of Jesus of Nazareth as well, could be explained as solar myths.[1]

The leading idea of M. Pérès's pamphlet is perhaps not original with him. In the year 1819, eight years before the publication of the "Grand Erratum," Archbishop Whately had published anonymously a similar satire under the title "Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon Bonaparte," directed against the logic of David Hume's scepticism, and it is not impossible that M. Pérès heard of this pamphlet and that thereby the main argument of his plan was suggested to him. It is, however, highly improbable that he ever saw or read Whately's elaborate

[1] *L'Origine de tous les Cultes, ou la Religion Universelle.* Par. M. Dupuis. Paris, 1796.

expositions, else he would undoubtedly have made use of many details.

Archbishop Whately is very ponderous and imitates the subject of his criticism to such an extent that one may read many passages and whole pages without being able to detect the slightest trace of the author's irony. In fact, many of his arguments are not travesties at all, but are literally true. The life of Napoleon as it is popularly told not only in France but also in other countries does contain mythical elements; and many ancient stories told of mythical heroes were repeated of this latest and most extraordinary representative of historical prodigies.

The difference between Whately's ponderous sarcasm and M. Pérès's sprightly wit is characteristic of the two nationalities of the authors, and while appreciating the one, we need not detract from the other.

Jean Baptiste Pérès was Professor of Mathematics and Librarian of Agen, a small town of southern France. He was noted in the circle of his friends for his conservative tendencies in both politics and religion. His literary fame, however, rests entirely upon this little brochure on Napoleon in which he so successfully pilloried the superficial methods of rejecting historical evidences solely because they contain some mythical ingredients. His "Grand Erratum" appeared in several editions and has been translated into almost all European languages. It was hailed by conservatives of every stripe and color, and he was praised as the David who with a pretty pebble picked up from the bank of a brooklet had killed the Goliath of Biblical Criticism.

The truth is that the first attempts at Text as well as Higher Criticism were of a purely negative character. Every miracle and indeed every remarkable fact was explained as a myth, and it is only recently, within the last two or three decades, that our Higher Critics have begun to appreciate the conservative character of all religious traditions. We now know that both the Old and the New Testaments contain ingredients of unquestionably historical reliability, and though they have frequently been re-edited and revised under the influence of later dogmatic tendencies, portions of them (e. g., in Genesis) are much older than would suit the most rigorous conservatives of former years.

The sole excuse for republishing M. Pérès's "Grand Er-

ratum " is the fact that it is out of print and forgotten. No copy can be found in any of the Chicago libraries. Nor does it exist in the Congressional Library at Washington, and we could only with great difficulty through the courtesy of Messrs. Kegan Paul & Co. get hold of a second-hand copy in England, which is a translation made from the French by a young lady who writes under the name " Lily," and is accompanied with an introduction by Richard Garnet, LL. D., of the British Museum. It bears no date and is published by E. W. Allen, London.

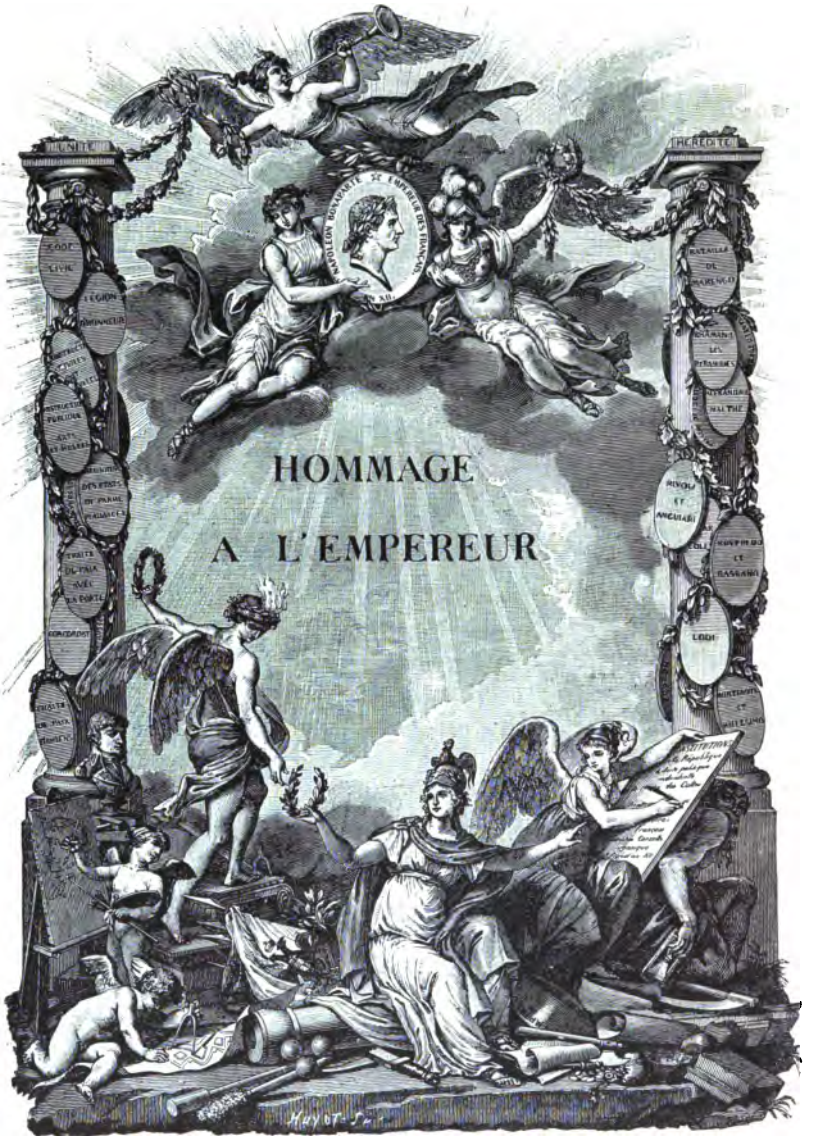
* * *

It will be very instructive to study the nature of myth formation or rather myth accretion, not only in following the wake of the higher criticism of the New Testament, but also in parallel instances such as Napoleon's. We see here how rapidly folklore tales attach themselves to a dramatic figure of history; and Napoleon's case is perhaps the better for a student, because his personality is still within clear remembrance of the last but one generation and the legends have developed under the very eyes of a civilized world, whose historians were in the habit of recording facts with accuracy and whose writings are still within reach. It is for this purpose that we publish here a summary of the case of " The Mythical Napoleon," by Henry Ridgely Evans, who has made a special study of the mythopoeic element in his career.

The satire of M. Pérès will be better understood when read in the light which Mr. Evans throws on the subject; and we may add, the lesson is applicable to the life stories of almost all national and religious leaders of mankind.

PAUL CARUS.

GRAND ERRATUM. THE NON-EXISTENCE OF NAPOLEON PROVED.



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GRAND ERRATUM. THE NON-EXISTENCE OF NAPOLEON PROVED.

BY JEAN-BAPTISTE PÉRÈS.

Napoleon Bonaparte, of whom so much has been said and written, never even existed. He is nothing more than an allegorical personage. He is the personification of the sun; and we can prove our assertion by showing how everything related of Napoleon the Great has been borrowed from the great luminary. Let us see briefly what we are told of this remarkable man.

We are told:

That he was called Napoleon Bonaparte;

That he was born in an island in the Mediterranean sea;

That his mother's name was Letitia;

That he had three sisters and four brothers, three of whom were kings;

That he had two wives, one of whom bore him a son;

That he put an end to a great revolution;

That he had under him sixteen marshals of the empire, twelve of whom were in active service;

That he prevailed in the South, and was defeated in the North;

To conclude, that after a reign of twelve years, begun upon his arrival from the East, he departed, and disappeared in the Western seas.

It remains for us to ascertain whether these various details are

borrowed from the sun, and we hope that every reader of this disquisition will rise convinced that this is the case.

1. In the first place, every one knows that the sun is called Apollo by the poets. Now, the difference between Apollo and Napoleon is not a great one, and it will appear very much less still if we go back to the meaning and origin of these names. It is unquestionable that the word Apollo means *Exterminator;* and it seems that this name was given by the Greeks to the sun on account of the injury it did them before Troy, where a part of their army perished from the excessive heat, and from the pestilence that followed at the time of the outrage perpetrated by Agamemnon on Chryses, priest of the sun, as we read at the beginning of the "Iliad" of Homer. The brilliant imagination of the Greek poets transformed the rays of the luminary into flaming arrows, hurled on all sides by the angry god, who would soon have exterminated everything if his wrath had not been appeased by the release of Chryseïs, daughter of Chryses, the sacrificial priest.

This, then, is probably the reason why the sun was called Apollo. But whatever the cause or circumstance which occasioned the giving of such a name to this luminary, it is certain that the name means Exterminator.

Now, Apollo is the same word as Apoleon. They are derived from Apollyô (ἀπολλύω), or Apoleô (ἀπολέω), two Greek verbs which are really the same, and which mean "destroy," "kill." "exterminate."

Thus, if the fictitious hero of our century were called Apoleon, he would have the same name as the sun, and would besides fulfil the meaning of the name; for he is pictured to us as the greatest exterminator of men who ever existed. But this personage is called Napoleon, and thus his name contains an initial letter which we do not find in the name of the sun. Yes, there is an extra letter, an extra syllable even; for, according to the inscriptions cut in every part of the capital (Paris), the real name of this supposed hero was *Néapoleon,* or *Néapolion.* This is more particularly to be seen on the column of the Place Vendôme.

Now, this extra syllable makes no difference whatever. The syllable, no doubt, like the rest of the name, is Greek; and in

NAPOLEON AT VRIENNE. (By Dumas Realier.)

Greek *ne* (νη), or *nai* (ναι), is one of the strongest affirmations, equivalent to our *veritably,* or *yea.* Whence it follows that Napoleon means Veritable Exterminator,— Veritable Apollo; it means, in truth, the sun.

But what is to be said of his other name? What connection can there be between the word *Bonaparte* and the star of the day? At first it is not at all evident, but this at least can be understood: that as *bona parte* means "good part," it has no doubt to do with something consisting of two parts, a good and a bad, with something which in addition is connected with the sun, Napoleon. Now, nothing is more directly connected with the sun than the results of his diurnal revolution, and these results are day and night, light and darkness; the light produced by his presence, and that darkness which prevails during his absence. This is an allegory borrowed from the Persians. They have the reign of Ormuzd and Ahriman, of light and darkness, of good and bad spirits. And it is to these last, spirits of evil and darkness, that people used formerly to devote their foes, using the following imprecation: *Abi in malam partem.* If by *mala parte* was meant darkness, no doubt *bona parte* meant light,— day as opposed to night. There can then be no doubt that this name is connected with the sun, especially when it is seen to be associated with Napoleon, who is himself the sun, as has been already demonstrated.

2. According to Greek mythology, Apollo was born in an island in the Mediterranean (the Isle of Delos); an island in the Mediterranean has, therefore, been fabled as the birthplace of Napoleon; and the preference has been given to Corsica, because the relative positions of Corsica and France, where he was to be made to reign, correspond best to those of Greece and Delos, where were situated the chief temples and oracles of Apollo.

Pausanias, it is true, calls Apollo an Egyptian divinity; but it does not follow that an Egyptian divinity must be born in Egypt; it is enough that he should be there regarded as a god, and that is what Pausanias meant. He designed to inform us that the Egyptians worshipped Apollo, and that establishes yet another connection between Napoleon and the sun; for Napoleon is said to have been held in Egypt to be invested with supernatural qualities, to

have been regarded as the friend of Mahomet, and to have received homage partaking of the nature of adoration.

3. His mother is said to have been named Letitia. But by the word Letitia (or "joy") was meant the dawn whose first tender light fills all nature with joy. It is the dawn, say the

GENERAL BONAPARTE. (After Guérin.)

poets, which brings forth the sun, flinging wide for him the portals of the East with her rosy-tipped fingers.

Again it is worthy of remark that, according to Greek mythology, the mother of Apollo was called *Leto* (Δητω). But if the Romans made Latona of Leto, it has been preferred in our century to change it into Letitia, because *lætitia* is the noun derived from *lætor* (obsolete form, *læto*), which means "to inspire joy."

Assuredly, then, this *Letitia,* no less than her son, belongs to Greek mythology.

4. According to tradition, this son of Letitia had three sisters, and there can be no doubt that these three sisters are the three Graces, who, with their companions the Muses, were the ornaments of their brother Apollo's court.

5. This modern Apollo is said to have had four brothers. Now, as we shall show, these four brothers are the four seasons of the year. Let us not be startled, at the outset, at seeing the seasons represented by men rather than women. It ought not even to seem an innovation, since, in French, only one of the four seasons, the autumn, is feminine; and even with respect to that our grammarians are disagreed. But in Latin *autumnus* is no more feminine than the other three seasons, so there is no difficulty on that point. The four brothers of Napoleon may very well represent the four seasons, and what follows proves that they really do so.

Of Napoleon's four brothers, three, they tell us, were kings; these three kings are Spring, who reigns over the flowers; Summer, who reigns over the harvest; and Autumn, who reigns over the fruit. As these three seasons derive all their potent influence from the sun, we are told that Napoleon's three brothers held their sovereignty at his hands, and reigned only by his authority. And when it is added that of Napoleon's four brothers one was not a king, it is because one of the four seasons — Winter, reigns over nothing. But if, to invalidate our parallel, it were alleged that Winter was not without sway, and if it were wished to ascribe to him the dismal principality of the frosts and snows which whiten our land at this melancholy season, our answer would be ready: that, we should say, is what was designed to be shown by the empty and ridiculous principality with which this brother of Napoleon is said to have been invested after the fall of all his family. This principality has been described as in connection with the village of *Canino,* in preference to any other, because *Canino* comes from *cani,* which denotes the white hairs of chill old age, and they recall winter. For, to the poet, the forests crowning our hill-sides are locks of hair; and when Winter covers them with his hoar frost, it is the white hairs of failing nature in the old age of the year.

Cum gelidus crescit *canis* in montibus humor.

Thus the pretended Prince of Canino is nothing more than the personification of winter. Winter begins when nothing more is left of the three good seasons, and the sun is at his greatest dis-

NAPOLEON AT THE BATTLE OF THE PYRAMIDS. (By Gros.) Museum at Versailles.

tance from our country, which is invaded by the furious *children of the north,* the poet's name for the winds; the winds come from northern climes, discolor our land, and cover it with a detested whiteness. This has given rise to the fabulous account of the

invasion of the northern nations into France, where they are said to have done away with a parti-colored flag adorning it, and to have substituted a white one which entirely covered it, after the exile of the fabulous Napoleon. It would be idle to repeat that this is merely emblematical of the rime that the winds from the north produce in the winter, and which obliterates the charming colors that the sun produced in our land, before he waned and departed from us. It is easy to see the analogy of all these things with the ingenious fables conceived in our century.

6. According to these same fables, Napoleon had two wives; hence two wives have been attributed to the sun. These two wives are the moon and the earth: the moon according to the Greeks (Plutarch is our authority), and the earth according to the Egyptians; with this noteworthy difference, that by the moon the sun had no issue, and by the earth he had a son, *an only son.* This child was the little Horus, son of Osiris and Isis; that is to say, of the sun and the earth, as may be seen in the "History of the Heavens," Vol. I., p. 61 and following. It is an Egyptian allegory, where the little Horus, born from the earth impregnated by the sun, represents the fruits of agriculture. Even so the birth of the supposed son of Napoleon has been fixed at the 20th of March, the period of the vernal equinox, because in the spring agricultural produce undergoes its most important phase of development.

7. Napoleon is said to have put an end to a devastating scourge which *terrorized* all France, and was called the Hydra of the Revolution. Now, a hydra is a serpent, of what kind matters little, especially when the serpent is fabulous. The Python, an enormous serpent, was the cause of great terror in Greece; Apollo slew the monster, and dissipated the fear of the people; this was his first exploit. Hence we are told that Napoleon began his reign by crushing the French Revolution, which is itself as much a chimera as everything else. For *revolution* is obviously derived from the Latin word *revolutus,* which denotes a curled-up serpent. The Revolution is the Python, neither more nor less.

8. The celebrated warrior of the nineteenth century had under him, we are told, twelve marshals at the head of his armies, and four were not in active service. Now, the twelve first are obviously the twelve signs of the zodiac, marching under the or-

ders of the sun Napoleon, each of them commanding a division of the innumerable army of the stars, which is called the *celestial host* in the Bible, and is divided into twelve parts, corresponding to the twelve signs of the zodiac. Such are the twelve marshals who, according to our mythical chronicles, were actively em-

INSTALLATION OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE.

ployed under the Emperor Napoleon. The four others, in all probability, are the four cardinal points, which, fixed amid universal motion, are very well symbolised by the inactivity of which we have spoken.

Thus, all these marshals, active and inactive, are purely symbolical beings, with no more reality than their leader.

9. We are told that this leader of so many brilliant armies overran in triumph the countries of the south, but that, having penetrated too far north, he was there unable to maintain himself: Now, these details precisely apply to the sun's course. The sun, it is well known, rules supreme in the south, as is said of the Emperor Napoleon. But it is most worthy of note that, after the vernal equinox, the sun makes for the northern regions, and moves further away from the Equator. But when he has taken his course in this direction for three months, he encounters the North Tropic, which compels him to retreat and go back the way he came to the south, following the sign Cancer, or Crab; which sign, according to Macrobius, derives its name from the retrograde course of the sun in this region of the globe. This, then, is the material from which has been drawn Napoleon's imaginary northern expedition to Moscow, together with the humiliating retreat by which it is said to have been followed.

Thus everything we have been told of the success or defeat of this strange warrior is nothing more than a series of allusions to the course of the sun.

10. Finally, and this needs no explanation, the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, as all the world knows. But to the spectators at the extremities of the earth, the sun seems to rise from the eastern sea in the morning and to plunge into the western sea at night. It is, moreover, thus that poets describe his rising and setting.

That, then, is all we are to understand when we are told that Napoleon came by sea from the east (Egypt) to reign over France, and that he disappeared in the western seas after a reign of twelve years. The twelve years are nothing more than the twelve hours of the day during which the sun shines on the horizon.

"He reigned but a day," says the author of "Les Nouvelles Messéniennes," speaking of Napoleon; and the way in which he describes his rise, decline, and fall shows that, like ourselves, this delightful poet saw in Napoleon nothing more than an image of the sun. And in truth he is nothing more. His name proves it; his mother's name proves it; his three sisters, his four brothers, his two wives, his son, his marshals, his exploits,— all prove it. It is proved, moreover, by his birthplace; by the regions whence

we are told, he came before entering on his career of dominion; by the time he employed in traversing those regions; by the countries where he prevailed, by those where he succumbed; and by the place where he vanished, pale and *discrowned,* after his brilliant course,— to quote the poet Casimir Delavigne.

It has, then, been proved that the supposed hero of our century is nothing more than an allegorical personage, deriving his attributes from the sun. It follows that Napoleon Bonaparte, of whom so much has been said and written, never even existed; and this fallacy, into which so many people have fallen headlong, arises from the amusing blunder of mistaking the mythology of the nineteenth century for history.

We might further have appealed in support of our contention to a great number of royal ordinances, whose indisputable dates are evidently irreconcilable with the reign of the pretended Napoleon; but we have had sound reasons for letting them alone.

THE MYTHICAL NAPOLEON.

THE SOLDIER'S DREAM. (Detaille.)

THE MYTHICAL NAPOLEON.

AN OCCULT STUDY.

BY HENRY RIDGELY EVANS.

"The real hero of modern legend, the legend that towers above the whole century, is Napoleon."—*Inter. Quar.*, Vol. VI., No. 1. Sept.-Dec., 1902.

"After Marengo, you are the hero of Europe, the man of Providence, anointed of the Lord; after Austerlitz, Napoleon the Great; after Waterloo, the Corsican ogre." Victor Hugo: *William Shakespeare.*

I.

It has been the fate of the great historical personages — warriors, priests, poets, kings and reformers — to have woven about them a tissue of myths and fables. Miraculous stories have grown up about the Christ, Moses, Mohammed, Buddha, Zoroaster, Pythagoras, Alexander the Great, Charlemagne and Napoleon I: entirely obscuring the true characters of these great men. They remind one of the interminable bandages wrapt about the Egyptian mummy. One has to unwind these cerement cloths in order to get a view of the body — to see it in its staring nakedness. It is, then, the duty of the student of history to dissipate these myths and fanciful stories, to treat men as real beings, and not as demi-gods.

Let us take Napoleon I. as an example. There is a Napoleonic legend that persists in spite of the iconoclastic efforts of modern historians to destroy it. Like Banquo's ghost it will not *down*. The name of Napoleon is still one to conjure with. We make pilgrimages to his tomb, under the gilded dome of the Invalides, and offer up our devotions to the ashes of the dead hero. By paying a small fee to a uniformed official, we may gaze upon his little cocked hat — *le Chapeau de Marengo,* which has been metamorphosed into a symbol or fetish by a French painter. Every few years there is a tremendous revival of the Napoleonic cult. Witness the extraordinary enthusiasm over Rostand's play "L'Aiglon," with its memories of the great soldier and his ill-fated son, the poor eaglet who beat his feeble wings in vain against the golden bars of his cage.

Says Debrit: "The Napoleonic legend did not arise at once. that is, while he was the all-powerful master of France, and while he was crushing Europe under his iron heel with an amount of free-and-easiness, and a contempt for the rights of others that has been equaled or surpassed only by the great Asiatic conquerors, Tamerlane and Ghenghis Khan. At that time he was admired and feared, but he had not yet become, as he did become later, the ideal of grandeur and chivalric majesty. His epic commenced after his fall only . . . It was developed after Waterloo, especially when the vanquished despot appeared in fallen majesty on that rock of St. Helena, which turned out, indeed, to be a magnificent pedestal for him."

Napoleon's memoirs are crowded with misstatements and garbled facts. They might be called his apocrapha. They dwell almost exclusively upon the earlier period of his career and on the Waterloo campaign. Says J. R. Seeley (*Napoleon I.*, p. 230):

"They reminded the world that the Prometheus now agonizing on the lonely rock, who had lately fallen in defending a free nation against a coalition of kings and emperors, was the same who, in his youth, had been the champion of the First French Republic against the First Coalition. They consigned the long interval to oblivion. Hence the Napoleonic legend, which has

grown up in the very midst of the nineteenth century, and would perhaps never have been seriously shaken but for the failure of the Second Empire."

Napoleon's career between the years 1803 and 1814, when it was "shaped most freely by his own will," was an unparalleled

THE EIGHT EPOCHS OF THE LIFE OF NAPOLEON.

This original series of hats, presented in different significant positions, is from the pencil of Steuben, one of the most fertile painters of the First Empire, and symbolizes the eight principal epochs in Napoleon's career: (1) Vendémiaire, (2) Consulate, (3) Empire, (4) Austerlitz, (5) Wagram, (6) Moscow, (7) Waterloo, (8) St. Helena. (From Armand Dayot's *Napoléon raconté par l'image.* Paris: Librairie Hachette & Cie. 1895.)

despotism, during which a republic was crushed out of existence and a hereditary monarchy set up in its place — a brummagem Court, with all the trappings of royalty, but crowded with military adventurers, whose *manières bourgeoises* were the laughing stock of the aristocracies of Europe. You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, though you may metamorphose an innkeeper's apprentice into a Marshal of France. A marshal may

know how to use his sword to perfection, but to wield his knife and fork at a fashionable dinner party — ah, that is another matter entirely!

Napoleon during the above-mentioned period was the great enemy and oppressor of nationalities. He ground a free press to powder beneath his iron heel and filled France with the spies of the arch-sycophant and hypocrite, Fouché. Trusting no one, no one trusted him, as witness the conduct of the ex-Bishop of Autun, Talleyrand, who sold his master a dozen times over, and pocketed the proceeds, but unlike Judas, without remorse.

Europe was plundered of its art treasures to fill the galleries and museums of France. It was a species of highway robbery on a gigantic scale. This and other acts of Napoleon led the historian Taine to characterise him as the *Corsican Bandit.*

The nationality movement, which began in Spain and Tyrol and spread through North Germany, was a reaction against Napoleon's tyranny. "In the year 1815," says Seeley, "he posed as a champion and martyr of the nationality principle against the Holy Alliance. The curtain fell upon this pose. It brought back the memory of that Bonaparte, who at the end of the eighteenth century had seemed the antique republican hero dreamed by Rousseau, and men forgot once more how completely he had disappointed their expectations. By looking only at the beginning and at the end of his career, and by disregarding all the intermediate period, an imaginary Napoleon has been obtained, who is a republican, not a despot; a lover of liberty, not an authoritarian; a champion of the Revolution, not the destroyer of the Revolution; a hero of independence, not a conqueror; a friend of the people, not a contemner of the people; a man of heart and virtue, not a ruthless militarist, cynic, and Machiavellian. This illusion led to the restoration of the Napoleonic dynasty in 1852."

Lord Wolseley says of Napoleon ("Cosmopolitan Magazine," January, 1903):

"His longing for praise was strong, but his determination to secure posthumous fame was still stronger. It was not enough, it did not satisfy his insatiable craving for renown, that all nations should recognise him as the greatest of living men; he

would have his name coupled forever with those of Alexander and of Julius Cæsar, and placed beside theirs in the world's great Valhalla. Of all he wrote and dictated at St. Helena, this aspiration was the keynote. Those who assisted him in the compilation of the hodgepodge of interesting untruths, concocted

EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

there for publication, helped in this plot to conceal facts and deceive future generations. He would have had us forget the heroes of other ages, and would have history filled with the story of his fame alone. He placed on record in his beautiful island prison, not what he had thought or said or done during the vicis-

situdes of his unparalleled career, but what he wished history to accept and repeat as facts forever.

"There is no great historical character of modern times whose early life has been more variously recorded than his has been, and none contributed to this result more than he did himself. The large amount of fiction with which his story abounds has so long passed current as fact *that legends have been created* [the italics are mine] *on its foundations to further what I may well term the 'Napoleonic worship.' These fables are still repeated in many of his most important biographies as facts beyond all dispute. As I take it, the aim of this great Corsican romancer was to mystify posterity concerning the occurrences of his early years by relating them not as they were but as he conceived they should have been in the life of the Second Cæsar — Napoleon, Emperor of the French.*"

II.

There is then a legendary Napoleon and a real Napoleon. The real Napoleon is gradually coming to light, and the mythical one is fading into the background. Modern historians are taking middle ground. The great Emperor is neither a monster of wickedness nor a hero-saint. Of his genius as a sovereign and as a strategist he has but few equals, if any. "Seldom," says Debrit, "has there appeared on this earth an intelligence better armed, or, in other words, better adapted to the work it had to perform and to the time at which it was to manifest itself. He found society in a state of complete decomposition, and his instinct for organisation enabled him to create out of it a new structure, made in his own image, moulded, as it were, on his own frame. . . .

"There are some five or six men in history that may be compared to him, and it will always be difficult to decide which of them all was the greatest, that is, the strongest, the most despotic, and the most feared. If he did not experience the enjoyment of ordering vast executions of men such as those in which his predecessors loved to contemplate their own grandeur and the nothingness of mankind, it is because he lived in Paris in the

nineteenth century of the Christian era, and not in Nineveh under the kings, the sons of Sargon. But he caused blood to flow in streams upon the battlefields for motives that were scarcely better, and he humbled more rulers and destroyed more states than any Sennacherib or Asurbanipal. He also had his hecatombs, and in this respect he need envy no one."

As to Napoleon the man, a flood of contemporary witnesses like De Rémusat, Pasquier, Chaptal, etc., bear witness to his

DIVIDING THE WORLD AMONG HIS BROTHERS—COLLECTION HENNINS.

character. He was the giant egotist of the world. In him the cold-blooded motto of the founder of the Jesuits, "the end justifies the means," was fully realised — and says Debrit, "there was but one inviolable right, the Emperor's will. But violence bears in itself the germ of weakness, and here is the unimpeachable verdict rendered by history, by the mouth of that servant of the empire (Pasquier), on the policy of excess and wilfulness that believed in violence and conquest only, and was constantly directed toward crushing some one,— now France, now the Pope, and now Europe into the bargain.

"'He ended,' says Pasquier, 'by being unable to secure to France its former frontiers, and he handed us over almost defenseless to the spirit of ultramontanism, and the encroachments of the papal power.'"

France was hypnotised by Napoleon, and saw only glory and conquest, instead of madness and ruin.

Cæsar Lombroso, the great criminologist, has this to say:

"Alexander the great [and] Napoleon I. . . . have the [criminal] type complete, and only the prestige coming from their great deeds (which always augments after death) makes us blind, so that in them, physically and morally, we only see the traits of genius and not those of the criminal. It is certain that in the busts and portraits of Napoleon I., after the Consulate, we find no more the asymmetric face, stern eyes, the exaggeration of the jaw bones, and the alveolar pragnathism which he really had, and, in the same way, few busts of Alexander the Great reveal his criminal type, with vertical wrinkles on the forehead, with the acrocephaly, etc. The same thing happens with us in judging their actions; we go to the point of excusing common crimes (murder of the Duke d'Enghein) and even as far as considering the butchery of the Borgias as works of genius, as did Machiavelli, and admiring the most insensate enterprises, such as those of Napoleon in Spain and Russia, and those of Alexander in India, taking them for profound conceptions as though errors and crimes, when made on a large scale, change their nature. Not only do people forgive, but they forget, the cynical indifference of Napoleon to the thousands of deaths which he caused and at the sight of which he did not know what to say except, 'A night of Paris will adjust all this,' and they also forget the order to shoot *en masse* 300 innocent Calabrese, setting fire to their village, because some one had shot at his soldiers, . . . and the firing of an entire city at the order of Alexander the Great only to please a courtesan, who murdered his best friend."*

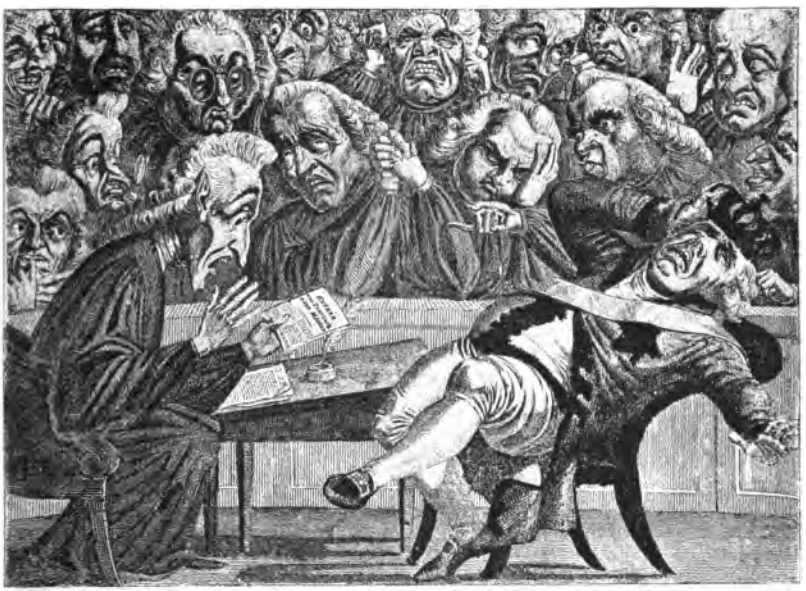
III.

Napoleon's Egyptian campaign was productive of legends.

When the hero of Lodi, after his splendid campaign in Italy,

* *Inter. Quar.*, Vol. VI., No. 2. Dec. 1902—March 1903, p. 239.

suggested Egypt, to the Directory, as the scene of future conflict and glory for the French arms, the legislative figureheads of France were not slow in taking the hint. They felt themselves insecure in their imitation curule chairs as long as the idol of the people and the army remained inactive at home. The excuse for the expedition was this: To strike a blow at the English in the East, and cut them off from communication with India. It was an extravagant idea altogether, this sending a French army



CARICATURE OF GEORGE III. AND HIS COUNCIL RECEIVING THE NEWS OF NAPOLEON'S CAPTURE OF MADRID.

into the Orient, to die by the sword and the plague amid the burning sands of the desert.

But the Directory wanted to get rid of Napoleon — they feared the future Cæsar, and consented to his plans. What splendid dreams of conquest and glory moved the ambitious soul of Bonaparte at this time? Who could fathom the burning and mysterious thoughts of that mighty soul? Did this lion heart aim at the conquering of the world? Who can tell?

Napoleon's efforts to conciliate the natives were theatrical in the extreme. His knowledge of men was profound, but he utterly

failed to comprehend the Moslem mind and character —that grave, drowsy, Oriental soul, so deeply indifferent to Western ideas and progress. When Cairo fell into the hands of the French, one of Napoleon's first efforts was to call an assemblage of Arab chieftains and form them into a Divan, or Senatorial body, to assist in governing Egypt, under the guiding hand of France. Then he issued the following remarkable proclamation, which was translated into Arabic:

"We (the French army) also are true Mussulmans. Is it not we who have destroyed the Knights of Malta, because these madmen believed that it was God's will that they should make war on Mussulmans? Thrice happy those who shall be with us. They shall prosper in their fortune and in their rank. Happy those who shall be neutral; they will have time to know us, and they will range themselves on our side. But woe to those who shall take up arms in favor of the Mameluke and fight against us. There shall be no hope for them; they shall all perish." (July 2, 1798.)

The soldiers only laughed at this bulletin and the Arabs received it with disdain. General Menou embraced Mahometanism, but his example, says Lanfrey, the French historian, "only excited ridicule, and he found very few imitators; but if the soldiers had no religious convictions, they had a proud feeling of their moral superiority. This obstacle made Bonaparte regret that he had not lived in ancient times when conquerors had no such scruples, and, speaking of Alexander the Great, he said he envied him his power of proclaiming himself the son of Jupiter Ammon, which had been worth more to him in his subjugation of Egypt than twenty battles gained. He adopted the sententious and imaginative language of the East, and never spoke to the Sheiks or Muftis without quoting on every occasion verses of the Koran, and continually boasted to them of having 'destroyed the Pope and overthrown the Cross.' He tried hard to strike the fatalist imagination by asserting that human efforts could not prevail against him, and by attributing to himself a kind of Divine commission to complete the work of Mahomet."

Napoleon's invasion of Syria was the sequel of one of those vast dreams of conquest in which he was wont to indulge. I quote again from Lanfrey: "At one time he studied the map of the deserts which separated Syria from Persia, fought over again the

campaigns of Alexander, and wrote to Tippoo-Saib that he was preparing to 'deliver him from the iron yoke of England.' At another time, he pictured himself as raising an insurrection of the Druses and Greek Christians against the Turks, and marching

NAPOLEON AND HIS SON. (Painting by Steuben.)

with this immense army upon Constantinople, and then, to use his own expression, 'taking Europe in the rear,' and overthrowing the Austrian monarchy on his way, and finally making the most marvelous triumphal entry into France recorded in the history of man."

During Napoleon's expedition to Syria two rebellions took

place in Egypt. One was that of an obscure fanatic, who declared himself to be the Angel El'mody, promised in the Koran to the faithful in the time of persecution. Says Lanfrey: "His only food was milk, in which he merely dipped his fingers and passed them over his lips; and his only weapon was a handful of dust, which he threw in the air, assuring his followers that this alone would disperse our army." Several thousand natives were concerned in this insurrection. It was quelled by General Lanusse, who put fifteen hundred of them to the sword. The angel who expected to make his enemies "bite the dust" was slain. His weapon proved a failure.

One of Napoleon's adventures at this period was his visit to the Greek monastery on Mt. Sinai, where, it is said, he inscribed his name under that of Mahomet in the register kept by the monks, but Bourrienne discredits the story.

History tells us that the soldiers who went on the Egyptian expedition had their hopes buoyed up with promises of wealth and rare treasures to be obtained in the new Golconda. In this respect they were like the swarthy followers of Cortez and Pizarro. Where were these great treasures to be found? In despoiling the poor fellaheen? Hardly so. For we know that it was the intention of Napoleon to propitiate the natives in every manner possible, and to win them over to French interests. Where, then, were to be found these fabled treasures? Perchance deep down in the bowels of the pyramids — hidden there by the olden Pharaohs centuries ago. This belief antedated the time of Napoleon. Caliph Al Mamoun, Moslem conqueror of Egypt, and son of that Haroun Al Raschid who figures so frequently in the "Arabian Nights," entertained the idea of precious treasures stowed away in the Great Pyramid, and ordered his army to quarry out an opening into the monument; but nothing rewarded the Arab workmen for their gigantic task save a solitary stone chest, hidden away in the King's Chamber — an open, lidless, despoiled sarcophagus. The soldiers were incensed, but Al Mamoun quieted their anger by the perpetration of a pious fraud. He directed the malcontents to delve to a certain spot, indicated by him, and they soon came upon a "sum of gold, exactly equal to the wages claimed for their work, which gold he had himself secretly deposited at the place."

Napoleon took with him, as is well known, a number of learned and brilliant savants, whose knowledge of Egyptian antiquities, hieroglyphics, and the like was profound. These archæologists went for the ostensible purpose of studying the monuments and relics of the land, in order to report upon the same for the benefit

THE KING OF ROME. (After Lawrence.)

of science, and bring back with them a magnificent collection of curios for the museums of France. Their presence with the army, though a matter of ridicule among the soldiers seemed to give color to the firm-rooted belief that treasure-hunting was the aim and ambition of the Little Corporal. When a square was formed by a regiment to resist the onslaughts of a fanatical Mameluke cavalry, the order was usually "Savants and asses in the centre." The savants, as the reader will recall to mind, rode

donkeys, like the regulation Egyptian tourists of to-day. The reader will find much curious and interesting data concerning the rumors current during the French occupation of Egypt as to Napoleon's acquisition of immense secret treasures discovered somewhere by him in the pyramids, in the gossipy memoirs of Madame Junot, wife of the General-in-Chief's favorite officer.

"Bonaparte," says Bourrienne (Memoirs, Vol. I.), "on the 14th of July, 1799, left Cairo for the pyramids. He intended spending three or four months in examining the ruins of the ancient necropolis of Memphis; but he was suddenly obliged to alter his plan. . . . Now the fact is, that Bonaparte never even entered the Great Pyramid. He never had any thought of entering it. I certainly should have accompanied him had he done so, for I never quitted his side for a single moment in the desert. He caused some persons to enter into the ancient tomb, while he remained outside, and received from them, on their return, an account of what they had seen. In other words, they informed him there was nothing to be seen." This event gave rise to a silly story that Napoleon entered the Great Pyramid and in the presence of the muftis and ulemas cried out, "Glory to Allah! God only is God, and Mahomet is his prophet."

History tells us that Napoleon departed hurriedly for Europe, after learning from some old newspapers sent him by his enemy, Sir Sidney Smith, that the French arms on the Continent were suffering reverses, and that the Directory was rotten to the core with its own imbecility. The time had come for the overthrow of this body. Junot, who loved Napoleon as his God, was heart-broken when his general deserted him. He applied to Klébér, the second in command, for leave to follow Bonaparte. It was granted, and the gallant soldier prepared to set out for France in the wake of his beloved leader. The story went like wild-fire through the army that Junot would carry with him an immense treasure — the treasure of the pyramids, which Napoleon in his haste was unable to take with him, and in consequence of the fact had left his factotum to transport, as part of his baggage. Says the Duchesse d'Abrantes:

"A report was circulated in the army that Junot was carrying away the treasures found in the pyramids by the General-in-Chief.

The matter was carried so far that several subalterns and soldiers proceeded to the shore, and some of them went on board the mer-

RETREAT FROM MOSCOW MARSHAL NEY ENCOURAGING THE REAR GUARD. (Painted by Yvon.) Museum of Versailles.

chantman which was to sail with Junot the same evening. They rummaged about, but found nothing; at length they came to a

prodigious chest, which ten men could not move, between decks. 'Here is the treasure,' cried the soldiers. 'Here is our pay that has been kept from us above a year; where is the key?' Junot's valet, an honest German, shouted to them in vain, with all his might, that the chest did not belong to his 'Cheneral.' They would not listen to him. Unluckily Junot, who was not to embark till evening, was not then on board. The mutineers seized a hatchet and began to cut away at the chest, which they would have soon broken up had not the ship's carpenter come running, quite out of breath. 'What the devil are you at?' cried he. 'Mad fellows that you are; stop! don't destroy my chest — here is the key.' He opened it immediately, and lo — the tools of the master carpenter of the ship.

"The odious calumny, the stupid invention, relative to the treasures of the Pharaohs, had meanwhile found believers elsewhere, as well as in the army. The English, for example, had been simple enough to give credit to this story. A ship was even cruising off Alexandria, and the merchantman in which Junot had sailed was obliged to bring to at the first summons of the Theseus, man-of-war, Captain Steele, while Junot and his aid-de-camp, Captain Lallemand, had not the power to make the least resistance, how well disposed soever they might have been to do so. 'We were waiting for you,' said Captain Steele to Junot and his companion."

IV.

Napoleon has been apotheosised like Alexander the Great, whom he resembles in many points of character. With his arms crossed on his breast, and his little hat on his head, he seems, in all his pictures, to be defying the universe like a demi-god, and imposing his iron will upon the races of mankind. Legend-makers eighteen hundred years from now will perhaps characterise him as a ruthless vandal from a barbarous island called Corsica, who swept over the civilised world carrying death and destruction in his train. Artists will picture him enthroned upon a huge truncated pyramid of human skulls, the spoils of his enemies. Many will express doubts that he ever existed. He will appear in the light of a mythical hero like King Arthur of Britain. This is not

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.
(Musée du Louvre, Paris.)

altogether improbable. Archbishop Whately in his essay, "Doubts Concerning the Existence of Napoleon," and M. Jean-Baptiste Pérès's "Grand Erratum, the Non-Existence of Napo-

NAPOLEON ON THE BRIDGE OF ARCOLE.
(After the oil-painting of Baron Gros.)

leon Proved," have given us curious examples of how this may be brought about. Those who believe in the reincarnations of the soul upon the earth, like the Theosophists, will perhaps endeavor to show that Napoleon was identical with Rameses II. (the Se-

sostris of the Greeks), with Alexander the Great, and also with Charlemagne. Let us see where this bizarre fancy will lead us.

In the splendid museum of Turin, Italy, among the ancient Egyptian relics, is a statue of Rameses, the face of which strongly resembles that of Napoleon, especially when seen in profile. Georg Ebers, the learned Egyptologist and novelist, calls attention to this strange likeness in his novel " Uarda."

It is an interesting fact to note that Napoleon frequently re-

marked to his friends that he was all but certain of his identity with the Gothic hero Charlemagne.

Victor Hugo says (*The Rhine, a Tour from Paris to Mayence, etc.*) :

" In 1804, when Bonaparte became known as Napoleon, he visited Aix-la-Chapelle, the birthplace of Charlemagne. Josephine, who accompanied him, had the caprice to seat herself upon the throne of Charlemagne [one of the relics to be seen in the old abbey] ; but Napoleon, out of respect for the great Emperor, took off his hat and remained for some time standing, and in silence. The following fact is somewhat remarkable, and struck me forci-

bly: In 814 Charlemagne died; a thousand years afterwards, most presumably about the same hour, Napoleon fell — 1814."

Napoleon's similarity to Alexander the Great has always possessed a fascination for me. Both were possessed with dreams of world-conquest, with the same contempt for human life, the same tireless capacity to labor, and both had the same military tactics — to perceive with an eagle's eye the vulnerable point in the foe's army and to hurl with lightning rapidity upon that spot an overwhelming phalanx of men. Napoleon, like Alexander, conquers Egypt, communes with the Sphinx, and dreams of becoming a species of demi-god, or Oriental despot. Compare the portraits of Alexander, such as we find them upon gems, coins, etc., with that of Napoleon, and the mind is at once struck with the wonderful resemblance. Of course it is all fanciful and bizarre, and one might well say that Napoleon cultivated the Greek type and the artists and sculptors who fixed his likeness upon canvas or in stone flattered him to this extent.

The Russian campaign gave rise to legends. In the famous retreat Napoleon travelled usually in a luxurious coach fitted up as a sleeping-carriage. Says Bigelow ("History of the German Struggle for Liberty," Vol. II., p. 27): "He only walked for the sake of stirring his blood. Of course he had a complete camp kitchen and an outfit of wine, and lived as well as it was possible to do. That he shared the struggles and sufferings of his men, even to the extent of riding his horse in their midst, is the invention of patriotic painters and novelists. Napoleon respected the doctrine *l'etat c'est moi,* and felt that he was serving the state badly if he neglected his own health." The soldiers during the retreat were burdened down with all sorts of articles taken from the sacred city of Moscow, money, jewelry, furs, costly laces and silks, icons, clocks, etc. Napoleon carried off with him as the *pièce de résistance* of the plundering expedition, the cross from the top of the Kremlin — "as though to prove that he had conquered the country by desecrating its capital. But it proved to be nothing but base metal, gaudily gilded for the purpose of deceiving those far away." Notwithstanding this, it was carried along in the strange procession to play its part in the anticipated triumphal entry of the modern Cæsar into Paris. It is related

RETREAT OF THE SACRED BATTALION AT WATERLOO. (After Raffet.)

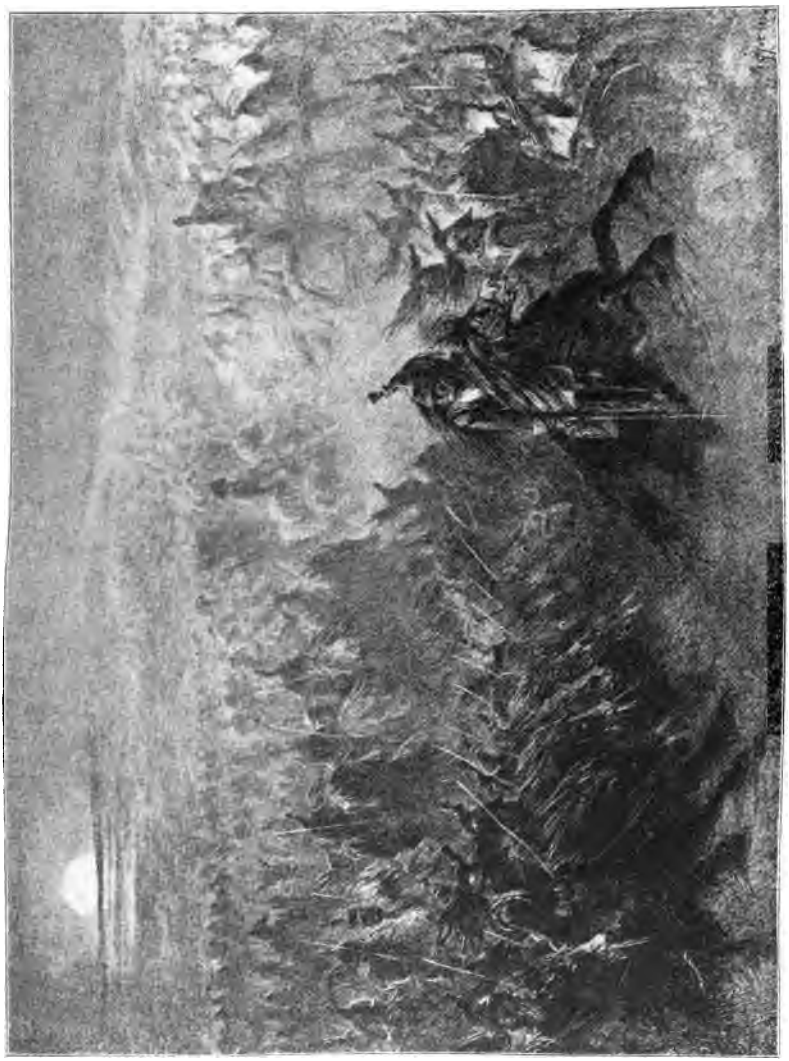
that on the entry of the French forces into Moscow that an eagle was seen entangled amid the chains of this cross, high up on the bulbous-shaped tower of the Kremlin. By some this was declared to portend disaster to the French army. It proved true; the Imperial Eagle of France, Napoleon, was certainly caught in the trap set for him by his enemy, Holy Russia, represented by the gilded cross. Moscow proved Napoleon's Golgotha. His downfall and exile to Elba began there.

Victor Hugo, poet, novelist, and symbolist, has given us the epic of Waterloo, in his powerful story, "Les Miserables," the foremost work of fiction of the 19th century. He has done for literature what Raffet and Steuben have done for art. Waterloo in Hugo's hands becomes the Supreme Enigma, the Twilight of the Gods. His conception of the subject is worthy of a Michael Angelo. The figures become gigantic. It is a species of Apocalypse. He says: "Was it possible for Napoleon to win the battle? We answer in the negative. Why? On account of Wellington; on account of Blucher? No; on account of God. . . . When the earth is suffering from an excessive burden, there are mysterious groans from the shadow, which the abyss hears. Napoleon had been denounced in infinitude, and his fall was decided. He had angered God. Waterloo is not a battle, but a transformation of the Universe." "Did this vertigo, this terror, this overthrow of the greatest bravery that ever astonished history, take place without a cause? No. The shadow of a mighty right hand is cast over Waterloo; it is the day of destiny, and the force which is above man produced that day. Hence the terror, hence all those great souls laying down their swords. Those who had conquered Europe, fell, crushed, having nothing more to say or do, and feeling a terrible presence in the shadow. *Hoc erat in fatis.* On that day the perspective of the human race was changed, and Waterloo is the hinge of the 19th century."

When Francis I. of Austria heard of the defeat of his son-in-law at Waterloo, he exclaimed: "I always thought that man would end badly; he wrote such a villainous hand." But to return to Hugo.

What word-painting could be grander than this bit from

Hugo's description of the Cuirassier charge: "At a distance it appeared as if two immense steel snakes were crawling toward the crest of the plateau; they traversed the battlefield like a flash.



LA REVUE NOCTURNE. (After Raffet.)

. . . It seemed as if this mass had become a monster, and had but one soul; each squadron undulated, and swelled like the rings of a polype. This could be seen through a vast smoke which was rent asunder at intervals; it was a pell-mell of helmets,

shouts and sabres, a stormy bounding of horses among cannon, and a disciplined and terrible array; while above it all flashed the cuirasses like the scales of the hydra. Such narratives seemed to belong to another age; something like this vision was doubtless traceable in the old Orphean epics describing the men-horses, the ancient hippanthropists, those Titans with human faces and equestrian chests whose gallop escaladed Olympus,— horrible, invulnerable, sublime; gods and brutes. It was a curious numerical coincidence that twenty-six battalions were preparing to receive the charge of these twenty-six squadrons."

The last stand of the Old Guard is described with equal magnificence. "They are no longer men, but demi-gods hurling thunderbolts." In the disastrous retreat he speaks of Napoleon as follows: "At nightfall, Bernard and Bertrand seized by the skirt of his coat, in a field near Genappe, a haggard, thoughtful, gloomy man, who, carried so far by the current of the rout, had just dismounted, passed the bridle over his arm, and was now, with wandering eye, returning alone to Waterloo. It was Napoleon, the immense somnambulist of the shattered dream, still striving to advance. . . . Such is Waterloo; but what does the Infinite care? All this tempest, all this cloud, this war, and then this peace. All this shadow did not for a moment disturb the flash of the mighty eye before which a grub, leaping from one blade of grass to another, equals the eagle flying from tower to tower at Notre Dame." . . .

"'Napoleon is dead,' said a passer-by to an invalid of Marengo and Waterloo. 'He dead!' the soldier exclaimed; 'much you know about him!' Imaginations deified this thrown man. Europe after Waterloo was dark, for some enormous gap was long left unfilled after the disappearance of Napoleon. . . .

"With the fall of the Dictatorship an entire European system crumbled away, and the Empire vanished in a shadow which resembled that of the expiring Roman world. Nations escaped from the abyss as in the time of the Barbarians. . . . The Empire, we confess, was lamented, and by heroic eyes, and its glory consists in the sword-made sceptre; the Empire was glory itself. It had spread over the whole earth all the light that tyranny can give,— a dim light, we will say, an obscure light;

paign of the Hundred Days, were "declared to be incapacitated to receive any title or form any part of the new army about to be organised. The superior officers were dragged before military commissioners." Ney, who led the last charge of the Guard, was shot. Many of the officers fled to foreign lands. Some of them came to Texas, and endeavored to form a settlement there, but

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without success. They drifted back to New Orleans and were lost sight of in the whirlpool of events.

V.

Napoleon was superstitious. He believed in the "evil eye." At St. Helena, referring to his first interview with his jailer, Sir Hudson Lowe, he said to Dr. O'Meara, "I never saw such a horrid countenance. He sat on a chair opposite to my sofa, and on a little table between us there was a cup of coffee. His physiognomy made such an unfavorable impression upon me that I thought his evil eye had poisoned the coffee, and I ordered Mar-

chand to throw it out of the window. I would not have swallowed it for the world."

Napoleon constantly referred to his "Star of Destiny."

In instituting his famous Legion of Honor, he substituted a *star* for the *cross* of St. Louis. The celebrated French mystic and cabalist, Eliphas Lévi, has this to say on the subject:*

* *De la Haute Magie*, vol. II., pp. 55-62. "The pentagram," says Lévi, "is called in the Gnostic schools the Blazing Star, and is the sign of Intellectual Omnipotence and Autocracy. It is the Star of the Magi; it is the sign of the Word made Flesh, and, according to the direction of its rays, this absolute symbol represents Good or Evil, Order or Disorder, the blessed Lamb of Ormuzd (Ahurô-Mazdaô), and St. John, or the accursed Goat of Mendes." . . .

FIGURE OF THE PENTAGRAM

(From Lévi's work *Dogme et rituel de la haute magie.*)

"The pentagram expresses the mind's domination over the elements and it is by this sign that we bind the demons of the air, the spirits of fire, the spectres of water, and the ghosts of earth. If it be asked how a sign can exercise that immense power over spirits which is claimed for the pentagram, we inquire in turn why the Christian world bows before the sign of the cross. The sign by itself is nothing, it derives its strength from the doctrine it symbolises, and of which it is the Logos. Now a sign which epitomises by signification all the occult forces of nature, and which has always manifested to elementary and other spirits a power superior to their own, naturally strikes them with fear and respect, and enforces their obedience by the empire of knowledge and will over ignorance and weakness. . . . The pentagram was traced by the old magicians on the threshold of the door, to prevent evil spirits from entering, and good ones from going out."

"The whole revolutionary work of modern times was symbolically summed up by the Napoleonic substitution of the *Star of Honor* for the Cross of St. Louis. It was the Pentagram substituted for the Labarum, the reinstatement of the symbol of light, the Masonic resurrection of Adon-hiram. It is said that Napoleon believed in his *star;* and that if he could have been persuaded to say what he understood by this star it would have been found that it was his own genius; and therefore he was in the right to

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adopt for his sign the Pentagram, that symbol of human sovereignty by the intelligent initiative."

VI.

Do what we may, the Napoleonic legend will die hard. The masses of the people, who are anything but critical, will still invest the great Emperor with the halo of mystery, superstition, and romance. Painters, poets, and novelists will contribute in the future, as they have done in the past, to this building up of the mythos about him.

The famous lithographic draughtsman, Raffet, years ago, be-

gan the symbolical and mystical treatment of the Napoleonic cycle. Take, for example, his "Retreat of the Sacred Battalion at Waterloo," "Waterloo, June 18, 1815," *La Revue Nocturne,* etc.

Could there be finer examples of idealisation in art than the Nocturne? It is the bizarre apotheosis of the imperial drama; a weird and fantastic bit of impressionism. It is midnight in the Champs Elysées. A cold wind blows; the moon is partly hidden

LONGWOOD FROM A DISTANCE.

by clouds. Suddenly appears a phantom army. The dead Napoleon holds a review of spectres — "aroused for one night from eternal slumber by the sound of the trumpet. An army of horsemen pass by like a whirlwind, and salute with their swords the modern Cæsar on his white charger."

The German poet, Zedlitz, celebrates the scene in some splendid verse; Raffet, in black and white, makes it real for us, conjuring up, like a modern Ezekiel, a second vision of the Valley of Dry Bones. They come, they come, from all parts of the world, soldiers from the burning sands of Egypt, the snowy steppes of

Russia, the vineyard dotted fields of Italy, to participate in the review, only to melt away into the land of shadows at the first blush of the dawn in the eastern sky.

Everything connected with Napoleon is theatrical, his coronation, his death, his second funeral. While he was dying, a terrific thunderstorm was raging at St. Helena. It seems as if nature had conspired to make the death of the Cæsar heroic. Amid

REVEILLE OF THE DEAD. (After Raffet,)

the crash of thunder, like the sound of artillery, Napoleon cried out, "*Tête d'armée!*" (Head of the army.) He doubtless imagined himself again at Austerlitz, or Waterloo. During the Emperor's sojourn at St. Helena, the English newspapers often hinted at French plots to rescue him. It is actually said that members of the Old Guard contemplated an attempt to take Napoleon from his rocky prison, but that it proved abortive, owing to the extreme vigilance of the English authorities. The lynx-eyed Sir

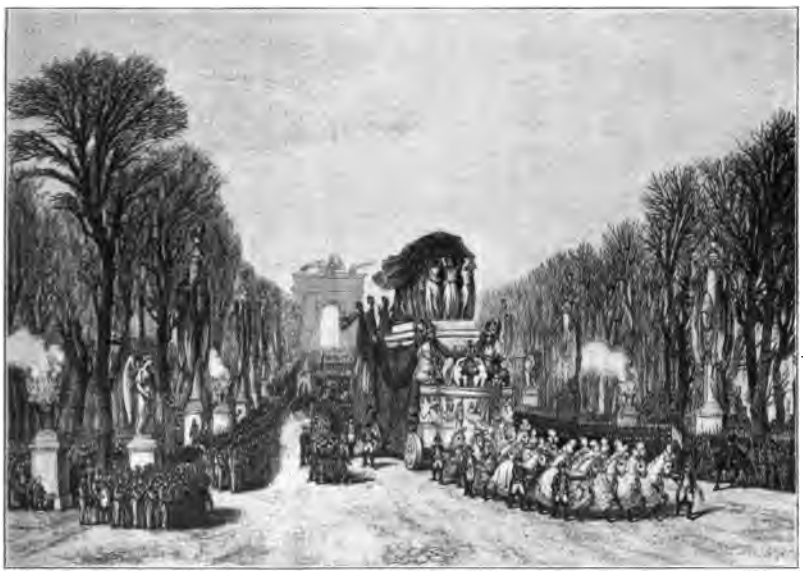
Hudson Lowe watched his wretched captive too well. Some day in the dim future, legend-makers will declare that Napoleon was delivered from his enemies. He will be made to sail away in a ship like the mythical Arthur, surrounded not by weeping women, but by the remnant of his Old Guard, those bronzed and battle-scarred heroes, and disappear forever from the knowledge of mankind. The great sarcophagus of black marble, beneath the dome of the Invalides will then have crumbled into dust, and be no longer a mute witness to the truth.

Napoleon's second funeral created a tremendous furore in France, and did much to perpetuate the legends. It was a great spectacle. On the Esplanade des Invalides, the giant funeral car passed between an avenue of thirty-two statues of famous kings and heroes, among whom were Charles Martel, Charlemagne, Clovis, and the Chevalier Bayard. Says Tarbell: "Oddly enough, this hedge of statues ended in one of Napoleon himself: the incongruity of the arrangement struck even the *gamins*. '*Tiens,*' cried one urchin, '*voila comme l'empereur fait la queue a lui mème.*' (Hello, see there how the Emperor brings up his own procession.)"

The funeral ceremonies at the Invalides was a great dramatic spectacle. Amid the glare of countless wax lights, the coffin was carried up the aisle, on the shoulders of soldiers and sailors. Louis Philippe stood at the catafalque to receive the remains. The Prince de Joinville, who headed the procession, said to him: "Sire, I bring you the body of the Emperor Napoleon." The king replied: "I receive it in the name of France." Then (to use the language of Thackeray, who was present, an interested spectator from *la perfide Albion*) "Bertrand put on the body the most glorious victorious sword that ever has been forged since the apt descendants of the first murderer learned how to hammer steel."

All this honor, all this sham magnificence, the colossal statues of *papier maché,* the gilded eagles, the tall braziers burning alcohol flames, the chanting of priests, the clouds of incense, the music, rolling drums, and thundering cannon — all this, thrown away upon the mute figure ensconced in its narrow house of lead. Pity that Dante had not lived in the Nineteenth Century to de-

scribe for us, in his lava-like verse, the punishment of the modern Cæsar in the Infernal Regions. Would it have been very different from a certain scene shown by Virgil to the poet? Imagine Napoleon, torn with remorse and horror, surrounded by the dismembered bodies of those slain during his wars of aggrandizement. The bloody arms with clenched hands rise up to menace him; the ghastly heads vomit curses upon him; the bodies exhibit their gaping wounds to him. Can we not hear these gory heads



FUNERAL CORTEGE IN THE CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES.
December 15, 1840. After the design of Ferogio and Giraid.

crying out to the Emperor: "Why didst thou desert us after Moscow, after Leipzig! Traitor, False Friend, Coward!" And one still more horrible-looking: "Ah, why didst thou not die with us at Waterloo, amid the wreck of the Old Guard!" Ah, why not? Because the great Gambler was irresistibly drawn like a needle to the lodestone rock — to the rock of St. Helena, the shadow of which doubtless darkened the cradle of his baby days. St. Helena was necessary for him. He who had insulted kings had to chafe and fume under the petty insults of a Hudson Lowe, and eat his heart out with chagrin, deserted by his Aus-

trian wife, who took comfort in the arms of a Von Neipperg. The bones of the wretched Josephine, rotting away at Malmaison, were indeed avenged.

The body of Napoleon was finally laid away in a massive sarcophagus of the black marble of Egypt. It lies beneath the great gilded dome of the Invalides, which has been compared by Hugo to a giant helmet, fit covering for the First Captain of the Age.

TOMB AT ST. HELENA. SILHOUETTE OF NAPOLEON AMONG THE TREES.
(Historical snuffbox in collection of M. Maze.)

NAPOLEON'S COCKED HAT.

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APPENDIX.

NAPOLEON'S COCKED HAT.

HISTORY OF THE FAMOUS BLACK FELT WORN AT WATERLOO.

(From N. Y. Tribune, Oct. 30, 1904.)

Paris, October 11.

The famous cocked hat worn by Napoleon at Waterloo was the subject of sharp discussion last Thursday at the Institute of France. The late painter, J. L. Gérôme, had bequeathed the historic relic to the Institute to be preserved in the Condé Museum at Chantilly. This legacy excited the indignation of several members of the Institute, including Messrs. Mezières, Gruyer and Léopold de Lisle, who petitioned that august body to refuse the bequest, alleging that, as the Chantilly Museum was a monument commemorating the glory of the great Condé, it would be highly unbecoming to place in it the head-dress of the man who in 1804 had ordered the Duc d'Enghien, great-grandson of the Prince of Condé, victor of Rocroy, to be shot. The question of the cocked hat became a burning issue, and, in accordance with the petition, an extraordinary plenary session was held, and after

a vigorous debate among the members of the five academies it was decided by a vote of forty-two to twenty-eight to accept the legacy. Consequently, the black felt Napoleonic hat will shortly be placed at Chantilly in a glass case beside the flag of Rocroy.

This exciting historical discussion has elicited interesting revelations concerning Napoleon's hats and uniforms. It appears that of the one hundred and fifty hats belonging to the great Emperor there are only seven now known to be in existence. By his will, dated April 15, 1821, Napoleon left to his son, the Duc de Reichstadt, all his wearing apparel and equipments, including jewels, hats, swords, saddles, uniforms, boots, spurs, camp bedsteads, etc. In the lot marked by the Emperor "C"— "inventory of my personal effects that Marchand will keep and deliver to my son"— were two cocked hats. After Napoleon's death the faithful Marchand sought in vain to be allowed to see the sequestered Duc de Reichstadt —"l'Aiglon"— and to hand over to him the objects that had belonged to his father. The Duc de Reichstadt died without ever seeing the relics bequeathed to him. The objects were then divided among the Emperor's surviving brothers and sisters. The hat worn by the Emperor at Waterloo was among the lot assigned to the ex-Queen Caroline, wife of Murat, who subsequently gave it to her secretary, F. B. de Mercey, "a reward for long and faithful services." De Mercey left the hat in his will to his eldest son, who some thirty years ago sold it for the sum of 17,000 francs to the painter, J. L. Gérôme. The historic hat was placed by Gérôme in a glass case in his dining room, adjoining his studio, at Montmartre, which was situated nearly opposite to the Moulin Rouge Music Hall. Shortly before the Duc d'Aumale's death Gérôme was lunching at the Chateau de Chantilly. While sipping coffee the painter remarked: "Do you know, monseigneur, that a paragraph in my will concerns you?" "Indeed," exclaimed the Duc d'Aumale. "Yes," replied Gérôme, "I have left to the Condé Museum the hat worn by Napoleon at Waterloo." The Duc d'Aumale manifested some astonishment, and asked Gérôme to tell him how the "interesting relic" came into his possession. No further mention was made of the hat until Gérôme's will was probated, when the matter was eagerly discussed, and it has

at last been decided to place the famous black felt head-dress in the central room of the museum beside the flag of Rocroy.

OLD SOLDIER'S PRAYER ON THE 5TH OF MAY. (After a Litho. by de Charlet.)

The seven authentic Napoleonic hats now in existence are all of different dimensions. Prince Victor Napoleon, Prince Louis Napoleon and the Empress Eugénie each have one. A fourth is

owned by Armand Dumarescq, a Parisian painter. Another figures in Mme. Tussaud's museum in London beside the guillotine which served to decapitate Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette. The sixth hat of Napoleon was once the property of Meissonier, the military painter, and, after having served as the model in all of that artist's pictures of the Emperor, was given by Charles Meissonier, the painter's son, to the Museum of the Army at the Invalides, where Napoleon was buried. The seventh hat of Napoleon is that which he wore at Waterloo, and which is now going to the Condé Museum at Chantilly, the magnificent castle and domain left by the late Duc d'Aumale, lineal descendant of Condé, to the Institute of France as a national monument to commemorate his illustrious ancestor.

It is interesting to note that the legend of the "petit chapeau" still exists. Frenchmen always refer to the headgear of the First Napoleon as "the little hat." This is because the hats worn by Bonaparte at Toulon, at Lodi, in Egypt, during the famous eighteenth Brumaire, and at Marengo were all quite small. When the Emperor became stouter he ordered his hatter to widen the brims of his head-dress so as to be more becoming. As he grew stout and as his face became bigger and bigger, his hats became broader and broader. The hat of Waterloo is considerably larger than the hat of Austerlitz. These facts are recorded in the inventories of the Emperor's hatters, Poupard et Cie., who had their shop near the Law Courts, and which were recently discovered by M. Germain Bapst, the Parisian antiquarian. Napoleon, although careful of his personal appearance, had a terrible habit of soiling his waistcoat with snuff, which he carried loose in the left-hand pocket, thereby doing away with the inconvenience of carrying a snuffbox. It appears that the Emperor had also a slovenly trick of wiping the ink from his fingers on his breeches. The hats, however, were free from such accidents, and he prided himself on the graceful way in which he wore them. A writer in the "Gaulois" suggests that it would be interesting to discover some of the hats which Napoleon invariably refused to remove from his head when he received kings and sovereign princes under the rank of Emperor. He uncovered his head only in the presence of the Emperors of

Russia and of Austria. One day Napoleon received the Kings of Bavaria and of Saxony at Saint-Cloud. As the two kings removed their hats the Emperor acknowledged their salutations by merely touching the brim of his cocked hat with his forefinger.— C. Inman Barnard, Paris Correspondent.